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Press Release

February 3, 2003

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**ATTORNEY GENERAL DARRELL V. MCGRAW, JR.
JOINS SEVERAL NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO
SPONSOR FIFTH ANNUAL NATIONAL CONSUMER PROTECTION WEEK**

Attorney General Darrell V. McGraw, Jr., has joined a group of federal, state and local organizations and national advocacy groups to launch the fifth annual National Consumer Protection Week (NCPW) February 2-8, 2003, to highlight consumer protection and education efforts. This year's theme, "Information Security: Putting the Pieces Together," focuses on practical steps consumers and businesses can take to manage their personal and sensitive information wisely and help minimize its misuse.

"Online safety is the responsibility of everyone who uses a computer, regardless of their age or occupation," said Attorney General McGraw. "I encourage everyone to take a look at the security of their personal information, online or off."

The good news is that securing our computers is largely a matter of routine maintenance. For consumers or business people, strong passwords, firewalls and up-to-date anti-virus software can go a long way toward protecting computers and personal or business information from those who would try to damage a network operation, or worse yet, steal personal information to commit a crime.

"West Virginia's Consumer Protection Division is proud to be a partner in sharing the message of the fifth annual National Consumer Protection Week campaign," said Attorney General McGraw. "Our goal is to help provide consumers and businesses with important tips to help them manage their personal and sensitive information wisely and minimize its misuse."

During NCPW, representatives from Attorney General McGraw's Consumer Protection Division will visit senior citizen centers, malls and post offices throughout the state helping consumers understand how information security affects the decisions they make at home and in the marketplace. Any organization, business or school that would like further information or would like someone from Attorney General McGraw's Consumer Protection Division to visit them is encouraged to call 1-800-368-8808 or 304-558-8986.

All organizations, even those that don't focus on information security issues, are encouraged to participate in this year's NCPW campaign. Employers, for example, can educate their employees with articles in employee publications, postings on their Internet sites or lunchtime seminars.

Organizers of this year's NCPW are the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the National Association of Consumer Agency Administrators (NACAA), the National Consumers League (NCL), AARP, the Better Business Bureau (BBB), the Consumer Federation of America (CFA), the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), the U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG), and the Federal Consumer Information Center (FCIC). For more information about NCPW, visit the NCPW website at www.consumer.gov/ncpw.

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